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ABSTRACT

Project S-114 (1977-1983) consisted of three objectives which dealt with rural Southern youth and focused on educational and occupational aspirations and attainment results for males and females, blacks and whites. Each objective involved utilization of a distinct dataset. In 1979 Objective 1 was completed; the fourth wave of a longitudinal panel study begun in 1966 was carried out by interviewing almost 1,000 young adults (then about 30 years old) raised in rural areas of 6 Southern states. Data were analyzed in areas such as education, occupation, residence, and family. Objective 2 was modified and ultimately used the National Longitudinal Study data for a wide variety of special analyses. Objective 3 involved the analysis of a survey mailed to almost 3,300 agriculture students and 2,400 home economics students at either 1862 or 1890 land-grant institutions in the South in 1977, which sought information about their rural and farm background, educational experiences, and adult occupational goals. The paper provides a brief description of each objective and its findings, mentions the unique aspects of the project, and lists a project bibliography which attests to the research's relevance to a wide range of professional audiences. The bibliography includes 46 journal articles, 6 departmental reports, and 6 books, monographs, or chapters. (NC/BRR)

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# S-114, Defining and Achieving Life Goals: A Process Of Human Resource Development. Termination Report of Cooperative Regional Project.

By

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RC014650

TERMINATION REPORT OF COOPERATIVE REGIONAL PROJECT
Supported by Allotments of the Regional Research Fund
Hatch Act, as Amended August 11, 1955

PROJECT: S-114, Defining and Achieving Life Goals: A Process of Human Resource Development

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DATES:

Project activated under RRF: January 1, 1977
Project extension granted: October 1, 1981
Project terminated: September 31, 1983

COOPERATING STATE STATIONS AND OTHER AGENCIES:

Alabama:
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Eloise Carter and Willie Rawls (Tuskegee)

Georgia:
*E. Yvonne Beauford and Melvin Walker (Fort Valley)
Patrick Horan (Georgia)

Kentucky:
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Louisiana:
*George W. Ohlendorf and William W. Falk (L.S.U.)

Mississippi:
*Carlton R. Sollie, Wolfgang Frese, Frank M. Howell, and Arthur G. Cosby (M. State)

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Daniel D. Godfrey (N.C.A & T)

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Carol A. Bocan and Betty L. Stout (Winthrop)
*Leola Adams (S.C. State)

Texas:
*John Thomas, Arthur G. Cosby, and Sue Sanchez (A&M)
*C. L. Strickland and Freddie L. Richards (Prairie View)

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John C. Robertson and C. B. Browning

(Asterisks precede the names of those who were voting members of the Technical Committee at the time of termination or the previous year.)

CSRS Representative: Edward O. Moe and David Brown

Administrative Advisor: Kenneth R. Keller and S. J. Ritchey

REASON FOR TERMINATION: All major objectives were achieved.

EXPENDITURES:
Regional Research Funds: _____
Hatch Funds: _____
Other Funds: _____

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS: This project consisted of three separate but related objectives each involving the utilization of a distinct dataset.

Objective 1. A longitudinal panel study involving almost 1,000 young adults raised in rural areas of six Southern states was completed. The fourth wave of interviews was carried out in 1979 when the panel members were about 30 years of age. Adult status achievements were determined and analyzed in relation to previously determined goal orientations from youth (1966 sophomore and 1968 senior) and early adulthood (1972) contacts. A wide variety of analyses have been completed concerning such areas as education, occupation, residence, and family; while other analyses have focused on race and sex differences in goals and goal attainments.

The transition from youth to adulthood is a period of trial and retrial as goal paths are confronted by the realities of life's opportunities. The high goal aspirations that characterize rural youth, both black and white, male and female, decline for most youth between their sophomore year in high school through their early 20's. Educational goals were affected more than occupational goals in this transition, perhaps because educational goals are the first to come in contact with the limitations of personal ability, financial resources, and opportunities that are encountered in adult life.

One analysis delt with the pay off of education for rural youth in terms of the quality of their adult occupation and employment situation. Job quality indicators of monthly income, supervisory responsibility, and work autonomy (perception of control over the work situation) were compared for different levels of educational attainment. Findings revealed positive rewards in job quality accruing to each distinct educational level, with junior or community college graduates (without college) doing better than trade school graduates, but not as well as college graduates (without advanced degrees). This pattern

of reward was the same for sex, race and migration subgroups. However rural males, whites, and migrants on the average received more job quality pay off from education than did females, blacks and nonmigrants.

A series of four comprehensive overview reports based on these data are in preparation. These had not been published as of the project termination date.

Objective 2. The original project was modified and this objective refocused in mid-course. Originally, additional primary data was to be sought using a new sample of high school students. However two national surveys were conducted during in 1970's which could provide data of the type desired for the South with the advantage of broader scope and little cost. Data tapes for the National Longitudinal Study (NLS) were purchased and shared among the states. These data were utilized for a wide variety of special analyses ranging from the recruitment of youth into nursing and teaching to the patterns of educational and occupational goal orientations of minorities such as women and blacks. Analyses considered the movement of young women into occupations traditionally dominated by males. Comparisons between women entering nontraditional occupations and those entering other occupations revealed little difference in family background and their marriage and family goals.

Objective 3. In Spring 1977 a mailed survey was conducted among all undergraduate students attending either 1862 or 1890 land-grant schools in the South. Both school (college) of agriculture and home economics students were studied. Independent samples of almost 3,300 agriculture students and 2,400 home economics students responded with information about their rural and farm background, educational experiences and adult occupational goals.

Findings revealed that agriculture students in the region are considerably different from their predecessors a generation ago. Some of this difference can be attributed to the increased numbers of women and urban students enrolled in agriculture. When residence is considered, the more traditional rural agriculture students contrast markedly with the nontraditional in terms of farm background and contact with prior agricultural education and 4-H experiences. Nontraditional agriculture students were less likely to expect to enter farming as an occupation or to ever own a farm. However, the most impressive finding was the high degree of similarity between traditional and nontraditional students in their very positive attitudes toward agriculture as providing good employment and career opportunities. Similarly, black students in agriculture resemble most closely the traditional agriculture student, as the majority came from rural areas, more had parents who owned farmland, and more had come through the 4-H and vocational agriculture experiences. Other special analyses focused on students enrolled in particular agriculture majors such as agronomy, horticulture, agricultural economics and business, and preveterinary medicine. Here the emphasis was on identifying differential characteristics and goals associated with the choice of a college major in some field of agriculture.

Less attention was given to the home economics data. However, analyses were done which showed the different recruitment that marks the seven most common majors in home economics. These data revealed three paths for enrolling in home economics majors. One is the traditional. It is motivated by contacts with professional home economists in school and extension organizations and applies especially to rural and black girls. A second path is the artistic. This attracts the more urban student with little or no identification with the

home economics profession. Motivation is to attain a career in fashion and interior design. The third path is that of the late entrant into a home economics major stemming from college experiences and the identification of new career opportunities and goals. Majors in foods and nutrition especially are of this type. Efforts to recruit more students to pursue careers in home economics should consider these paths in structuring such recruitment activities. Another analysis focused on black and white home economics students placing emphasis on how recruits to the field attending 1890 and 1862 schools compared in background, experience, and goal orientations.

MAJOR PUBLICATIONS:
(Journal Articles)


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Ohlendorf, G. W. and D. M. Rafferty
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APPLICATION OF RESULTS:

The Technical Committee was very cognizant of the need to provide research outputs that would be useful to a variety of users. Results of the agriculture/home economics studies were presented at meetings of the Southern Deans of Resident Instruction. An overview of the study was

presented and student profiles for each land-grant school were made available. Members of the Technical Committee made presentations to faculty and student groups on their respective campuses. Also, publication outlets were sought to communicate profiles of students in specific majors to professional audiences and teachers in order to acquaint them with the comparative profiles of students in specific majors as compared to all agriculture or home economics students. Current concerns for education and manpower issues affecting agriculture clearly point to the forward looking thrust of this research as a backdrop for the growing shortage of technically and professionally trained agricultural manpower.

Benefits of the youth to adulthood studies involved new information about the maturing process that was not previously available. As the first multi-state longitudinal dataset developed in the U.S. and the South, new research paths were forged into the early career decision and attainment processes. The unique focus on rural youth, both males and females, and blacks and whites, was another innovative aspect of this work. The large volume of published bulletins and journal articles attests to the relevance of this research to a wide range of professional audiences. Educational and occupational aspirations and attainments results were circulated to secondary school administrations, teachers, and counselors. This study well documents the far-reaching consequences that adolescent attitudes have for later adult achievement. The adolescent period is shown to be a critical point of intervention for efforts designed to improve educational and occupational chances of rural young people.

PREPARED BY:

_____ _____

Chairman, S-114 Technical Committee Date

APPROVED:

_____ _____

Administrative Advisor Date